

Let's put the Toyota recall announcement in perspective.

There have been thousands of automotive recalls over the last 30 years that did not involve Toyota, which has a sterling reputation for quality. Toyota's reputation is so high, and major problems with its cars so rare, that this recall is being played in the media like a "man-bites-dog" story.

Recalls are an unfortunate but fairly common part of the manufacturing process and all automakers have recalls. Chevrolet has one on now for about a million cars; in fact, [Internetautoguide.com](http://Internetautoguide.com) lists 55 Chevrolet models that have been subjected to recall since 1980. Ford has a current recall for vehicles with tendencies for engine fires.

The real story is how quickly Toyota identified the problems, found a solution, and delivered that solution into the hands of its dealers worldwide; those dealers are installing it now, working overtime; some even working 24/7.

That is a remarkable commitment to quality and customer service from the 170,000 Toyota employees in the USA and those elsewhere in the world – from all aspects of management, production and manufacturing, to dealers and their sales and service employees.

So, why all this furor over Toyota? Let a Time magazine story published August 28, 2009, set the stage:

***Last Auto Plant in California Shut by Toyota***

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What you're really seeing is an intense effort by trial lawyers, unions, some California politicians, and the federal government-owned General Motors to pile on Toyota, and you have to pause for a minute and wonder why.

The short answer is this is what happens when the federal government gets into the car business, and owns one of the competitors. The federal government owns GM; the company's second largest shareholder is the United Auto Workers.

This is the kind of thing that happens in a hotly competitive business environment when the number two - with the backing of the US government—tries to topple the number one.

The longer answer involves the imminent closure in March of the unionized NUMMI plant in California, as the United

Auto Workers try to force Toyota to keep the plant open – with a unionized workforce.

Couple that with the monetary interests of the trial lawyers, who are always eager to capitalize on the misfortunes of manufacturing companies.

So, you have this unholy alliance out there – a perfect storm – of unions, trial lawyers, and “Government Motors” trying to undermine not only the solid relationship Toyota has built over the years with its customers, but also Toyota’s commitment to building cars and doing business in the USA.

If this gets any further out of hand, the repercussions could be disastrous for my state and lots of other states.

Suggested actions:

- Letters to key government officials.
- News releases/statements
- Mention prominently in speeches
- Co-sign letters with other governors
- Engage and encourage local and state organizations to contact Congress